

# Quinnipiac University

## Department of Public Safety

275 Mount. Carmel Ave, Hamden, CT 06618  
203-582-6200

### Testimony for Public Safety and Security Committee from Edgar Rodriguez Chief of Public Safety

On behalf of Quinnipiac University, I am submitting testimony in opposition to **SB 122, An Act Concerning Security at Institutions of Higher Education** until further study on this matter can be completed.

Quinnipiac University's Department of Public Safety is responsible for the safety and security of our students, faculty, staff and community. **Raised Bill 122** poses serious concerns about the immediate and significant challenges to our institution. If adopted, the above "Bill" will eliminate the ability of our armed public safety personnel to respond rapidly to any act of violence occurring on any of our three campuses.

Our armed public safety officers have been trained to take immediate and decisive action to eliminate a threat when necessary. Waiting for outside resources that are not familiar with our university's infrastructures is not an option.

In of 2001, Shirley A. Wilson, Ph.D. of Bryant College, co-wrote a white paper regarding the perception of University Campus Security and University Public Safety. She concluded that university administrators face a higher levels of liability from a failure to properly protect its citizens (Shippee, 1996).

The final report on the mass shootings at Virginia Tech provides strong, factual indications that the loss of life can be, and has been, minimized by the rapid and immediate intervention of trained, armed personnel. Recent statistics indicate that 78 percent of the violent crimes occurring on campuses are committed by students rather than by outsiders (Hodge and Blyskal, 1989).

Since January 2013, there have been at least 168 school shootings, including fatal and non-fatal assaults, suicides and unintentional shootings, an average of nearly once a week. (<http://everytownresearch.org/school-shootings>). Forty-five percent of the shootings took place at a college or university.

In 2014, the Department of Public Safety adopted the standards set forth in Connecticut Public Act. 13-188. Armed Public Safety Officers employed by Quinnipiac University must possess the qualifications set forth in the act.

**Armed Public Safety Officer Mandatory Qualifications:**

1. Retired members of an organized local, state or federal government agency as a law enforcement officer, defined by section 53a-3 of the general statute, 13 USC § 926C – Carrying of concealed firearms by qualified retired law enforcement officers pursuant to the standards of the **Connecticut Public Act. 13-188**.
2. A local, state or federal law enforcement officer for an aggregate of **15 years** or more, and separated from such service in good standing.
3. A local, state or federal law enforcement officer for an aggregate of **10 years** or more, and separated from such service in good standing, due to a service-connected disability.

**Armed Public Safety Officer shall possess:**

1. Current State of Connecticut pistol permit.
2. Connecticut State Police approved armed security guard firearms permit (Blue Card).
3. Current State of Connecticut driver's license.
4. Basic computer skills.
5. Effective written and verbal communication skills.
6. Excellent interpersonal and human relation skills.
7. Ability to work independently and exercise good judgment and common sense appropriate to the related circumstances.
8. Ability to understand and carry out verbal and written instructions and prepare accurate and clear information for comprehensive report preparation.
9. Ability to deal with diverse groups of people.
10. Ability to maintain confidentiality of job-related information.
11. Ability and willingness to work rotating shifts covering all days of the week and all hours of the day, including weekends and holidays.

**Armed Public Safety Officers shall submit to and successfully satisfy:**

1. Extensive background investigation, including work history and criminal history.
2. Psychological evaluation.
3. Physical examination and drug screening.
4. Complete and successfully pass a peer interview and oral interview(s).

**Armed Public Safety Officers annual firearms training requirements:**

1. Department Policy and Procedures in the use of firearms
  - a. Documenting use of force
2. Use of Force Training
  - a. 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment "Reasonableness" Standard
  - b. San Francisco v Sheehan
  - c. CGS. 53a-18 thru 53a-22
  - d. Shoot Don't v Shoot Scenarios
3. Firearms Training
  - a. Quarterly live fire qualification, consistent with POSTC training standards
  - b. Shooting fundamentals
  - c. Weapons retention
4. State and Federal Case Law

- a. Graham v Conner
  - b. Tennessee v Garner
  - c. Kingsley v Hendrickson
- 5. Active-shooter training in conjunction with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies.
  - a. Tabletop exercises with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies.
  - b. Live active shooter full scale exercise with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies.

**All Public Safety officers complete the follow annual in-service training requirements:**

- 1. Is a minimum of forty (40) hours in-service training annually
- 2. Clery, Title IX, VAWA, FERPA, and HIPAA
- 3. Report writing and documentation
- 4. University directives, policy and procedures
- 5. Preservation of evidence in crime scenes, accident investigation, etc.
- 6. Diversity training, medical training and OSHA

**Raised Bill 122, if approved, would impact the university financially.**

**This include but not limited to the following:**

- 1. Time frame to meet the new requirements
- 2. The limited amount of training classes being offered at the Police Academy
- 3. Time frame to hire certified police officers
- 4. Back fill of personnel who are attending the training
- 5. The continued cost of training to maintain POSTC certification
- 6. Increased cost of liability insurance for the local jurisdiction
- 7. Equipment costs: acquisition, maintenance and replacement
- 8. Facility, including potential remodeling costs of an existing facility to bring it up to code, ensure a suitable and safe working environment and provide public access
- 9. Administrative costs, including polygraphs exams
- 10. Office equipment and supplies.

The decision to organize as a special police force should be optional. We are requesting for a continuance of the bill as it pertains to armed security personnel at any independent institution of higher education. Further study should be required to make it viable and reasonable.